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The Christian Pastorate.

AN

INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE

DELIVERED IN

THE PARISH (UNIVERSALIST) CHURCH,

STOUGHTON, MASS.,

ON SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 9, 1854.

BY J. W. DENNIS,

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH.

BOSTON:

PRINTED BY BAZIN & CHANDLER, 37 CORNHILL.

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REV. J. W. DENNIS,—

Dear Brother,—The undersigned, Committee of the Parish in Stoughton, being desirous, together with the members of said Parish, of seeing your very appropriate Sermon in print, delivered on the morning of the second Sabbath in April, preparatory to your entering upon the duties of your office as their Pastor, most respectfully solicit a copy of the same for publication.

Yours in the bonds of the Gospel,

LEMUEL GAY,
SAMUEL CAPEN,
WM. S. BELCHER.

Stoughton, April 23, 1854.

Stoughton, April 25, 1854.

BRETHREN,—

In compliance with your request, I herewith transmit you a copy of the Discourse delivered by me, as introductory to entering upon the duties of my office as your Pastor, which is at your disposal.

Very sincerely yours,

J. W. DENNIS.

To LEMUEL GAY, SAMUEL CAPEN, WM. S. BELCHER, }
Committee of the Parish in Stoughton. }



DISCOURSE.

"NOT FOR THAT WE WOULD HAVE DOMINION OVER YOUR FAITH, BUT ARE HELPERS OF YOUR JOY."—2 Cor. i: 24.

The Pastoral Office was instituted in the early days of Christianity. The first Apostles however, were engaged during the first period of their ministry in going about from place to place through the land preaching the word to such congregations as they might chance to assemble around them. They were, during this period of their ministry, simply Missionaries. With no stated places of preaching, they went abroad in obedience to the Master's command, to "teach all nations," to "preach the Gospel to every creature." It was their business to gather congregations, to make converts to the new religion, and organize churches. This work had to be done before the Pastoral Office could come into existence.

But when congregations had been gathered, and churches were formed, then arose the necessity of a new office. It was requisite that some one should take the special charge and oversight of the societies of believers thus gathered together. They needed to be instructed more minutely into the nature and principles of that faith which they had embraced; they needed that some one should minister regularly with them in their stated seasons of

public worship,—and out of this necessity grew the office of the Christian Pastorate.

The business of the Pastoral Office is the most interesting and important committed into the hands of man. It is a work that pertains to the minds and hearts of men, to their spiritual and eternal interests. The business of the Pastor is to promote the moral and religious culture of the people over whom he is placed. He is to seek their best improvement as intellectual and spiritual beings. By instructing them in the knowledge and principles of the Gospel, by his public ministrations to them from the pulpit, by visiting and personal communication with them, and by whatsoever other methods he may deem wise to adopt, he is to labor for their advancement in truth, in morals and in virtue. He is to comfort them in their trials; in their sorrows and bereavements, he is to administer the consolations which his religion so richly furnishes. Seeing before him the individuals of his charge, he is to seek, to secure the great aim which Christianity has with reference to them, which is the improvement and moral perfection of their characters. Christianity's purpose with reference to mankind, is to make them perfect; so to develop the faculties of their nature that they shall become all that is possible for them as men to be. "We preach Christ," says one of the first and ablest teachers of Christianity, "warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." And this is the object for which the Christian Pastor is to labor, to secure the best improvement, the highest culture, spiritually and religiously, of those to whom, by his election, he is called to minister.

The topic, my friends, which I have thus introduced, is suggested by the occasion of my present address to you. In the ministry, as well as in many other departments of human labor, custom, as well as the necessity and propriety of the case, has established the rule for an introductory discourse. It is expected that the preacher will, immediately after his settlement has been made, make allusion to the connection that has been formed, the labor he has assumed, and the duties of his new station.

It has been your pleasure as a Society to invite me to a home among you, and to assume the office of your Pastor and preacher. Upon mature and prayerful deliberation I accepted your invitation, and have at length entered upon my labors with you. Most firmly do I trust that the union now to be formed is ordained by that Divine Providence which always wisely directs the ways of men. The circumstances that have led to my connection with you in my present capacity, have realized to me, more than all other events of my life, the truth of that Scripture which declares, that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

I propose to speak at this time of the PASTORAL RELATION,—of its Nature, its Purpose, and the Means necessary to its prosperity.

With the Pastoral Relation are connected the highest benefits. It is calculated to promote the very highest and noblest interests. But to secure those benefits it is necessary, above all things, that the nature and object of that relation should be clearly understood. The reason for the failures so often attending it consists in the fact, more than in anything else, that its character, its object and

its duties, are not sufficiently understood by those who enter into it. And apprehending this fact, let us my brethren seek in the present instance for a full acquaintance with the nature of the connection now formed between us ; thus, shall we more properly direct our labor, and its benefits be more certainly reaped.

In stating the object of the Pastoral Relation, I would begin by observing, that it is to accomplish the aims and purposes of the Christian religion. What Christianity's great purpose is, is very plain, and may be stated in a few words. It designs the recovery of the world from its lost and ruined condition. It was instituted by its Divine Founder to accomplish the salvation of the world from sin. To secure this object among themselves the members of the Christian Society unite together. The true ideal of such a society, is that it is a people banded together to do good ; uniting themselves for the lofty purpose of securing their spiritual improvement, moved by the high and generous endeavor of seeking their own truest happiness and that of the world around them, going nobly forward day by day, and year by year, in a beautiful growth in all those many virtues and graces that exalt, improve and adorn humanity. This in brief is the object of the Christian Society. It is wholly for improvement, for religious culture and advancement; and the great duty, the one paramount duty of those who engage in it, is to make it promotive of this end.

And with this understanding of the nature and purpose of the organization which you have formed, my brethren, you will perceive at once the character of the duties devolving on me in my connection with you. The aim of my labors should be, and I trust will be, to secure among

you the high and sacred object for which you are instituted. As I have already observed, the duty of the Christian Pastor is to labor for the advancement of his people in all that is worthy, pure, and good. He is to seek their growth in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. His work is very beautifully stated in the words of the text, which were addressed by the Apostle in his second letter to the Corinthian church. "Not for that we would have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy." The pastor, in his connection with his people, is not to have dominion over their faith. He is invested with no such authority. Indeed such authority has never been delegated to man. Human belief is intended of Heaven to be free. It cannot be forced. It will not come and go at the bidding of man ; it is made forever independent of him, and he can never have dominion over it. And to attempt to dictate the opinions of his people, to say what they shall believe, and what they shall not, is not the business of the Christian Pastor. But, seeking the true object of his connection with them, instructing them in the great concerns pertaining to their religion, laboring to promote virtue, with every heavenly disposition among them, he is to be "a helper of their joy."

The nature of man renders him susceptible of the loftiest enjoyments. And the pre-eminent means by which they are to be secured to him is Christianity, that divine religion Jesus brought from Heaven. Nothing is so promotive of joy among men as this. Nothing is designed so surely to eradicate the evils of human life, remove its miseries, renovate and save it. Indeed, apart from this, there is no hope of human happiness. There is none other name given under Heaven, save that of

Jesus Christ, by which man can be exalted from his degradation, and brought to the high and noble condition for which his Maker designed him. Christianity purposes the holiness, the moral perfection of men, and in this way secures their highest happiness. And thus it is, the Christian Pastor is to effect the joy of his people,—by instructing them in the knowledge and principles of Jesus, by promoting truth, virtue, and piety among them. As these qualities multiply in their midst, happiness increases, and as grace abounds happiness abounds the more.

Let it be understood then, my brethren, that the great object of the organization which you have here formed, is the promotion of your religious interests. Let it be understood that the advancement of that object, is the purpose for which you have called me to my labors among you. Then will you understand what the character of my labors is to be, what you are to expect of me, and what I am to do. It will be my duty and business to pursue such a course in my work among you, as will be most effectual in securing your religious improvement, your growth in divine things. This will be the one aim I shall ever have in view in all my intercourse with you. Through all other concerns, I trust I shall look straight to this supreme object ; and whether I preach, or exhort, or pray ; whether I meet with you in the church, at the communion table, in the conference or the prayer meeting, or at your homes, at your firesides or at the festive party, wherever I shall be, and on whatever occasion,—this object, the advancement of your religious interests, will be my sole and constant purpose. In this way I shall aim to be a helper of your joy." And in this man-

ner, let me add, brethren, you should strive to be helpers of your own joy; for, as I have urged, only in this way, only by the cultivation of virtue and love in your midst, can your joy be secured. This is a truth, whose importance my poor words are utterly unable to describe. True it is, true as the oracles of God, that the cultivation of the Christian virtues and graces among men is the only source of their happiness.

What I have now stated, is the purpose of the union that is formed between the Pastor and his people. And though it is thus simple, and may be so clearly comprehended, yet it is very often misunderstood. Christian Societies very often prove that they have no true appreciation of the real purposes for which they are instituted. They seek from their organization almost anything else than what it is intended to bestow. Losing sight of the fact that the Church is the agency by which Religion is to be promoted among men, and that their chief expectations from it must be their spiritual profit, failing to keep this high purpose in view, they make it subservient to other ends, and hence lose almost altogether the benefits it is calculated to afford. The great passion of our age is for excitement. In every thing they now do, men seek for something entertaining. Mere pleasure is sought in these times as never before. To seek for happiness by practicing goodness, is ever commendable. But to seek for mere pleasure, to look simply for entertainment in what we do, is the very saddest of human mistakes. And sad as it is, we say, this mistake is now widely prevalent; and the pulpit, with almost every other thing, is made the subject of it. It is true that men have an interest in the church and preacher in proportion as they

minister to their desire for entertainment. If their church edifice is more beautiful than their neighbors, and the congregation larger and more fashionable, and the sermon more eloquent, they imagine their object accomplished, the end of all their efforts gained. But, let me say, this will never bring to any people true or permanent prosperity. Not mere empty and idle entertainment, but the higher purpose of their inward growth, the advancement of their intellectual and spiritual natures must be made their chief concern.

I know of no happier relation, in fact from its nature there can be none happier, than that which unites a Pastor and people, providing the true intentions of that relation be carried out. Where both are faithful; where each receives the sympathy, and assistance, and co-operation of the other, there is a happiness experienced, an enjoyment pure and holy, such as is known no where else on earth. It is the joy of a heavenly friendship, the pleasure that flows from a lofty spiritual communion and companionship. But on the other hand, where the true intentions of that relation are not carried out, where there is not existing a mutual sympathy and co-operation, there are few unions among men so unfortunate, so detrimental to the happiness and improvement of all concerned. The legitimate benefits of that relation must be sought, otherwise it becomes subversive of good. And here I would again repeat, that in order that that relation be rendered happy and profitable, its great purpose must be kept constantly in view. I have alluded to this fact, first, because it is of the first and supreme importance; because without regard to this, all other things will avail to no purpose.

And having thus treated of the importance of a clear understanding of the Nature of the relation existing between Pastor and people, I proceed now to mention another thing important to its prosperity. It is that the relation be a permanent one. No work depends so much upon the opportunity of permanent and continuous labor, as the work of the Pastoral Office. The experience of the past proves most unmistakeably that the prosperity of our churches is really certain, only with a permanent ministry. No man can labor successfully for the improvement of a people, unless he can look forward in his labors to a long period. The work he has to do among them and with them, is not the work of a day. Their religious culture, which, as I have been insisting, is the end of all the efforts of a Christian Pastor, is a work whose accomplishment demands the labor of a life. The Church is the Pastor's vineyard ; and he must have opportunity not only to sow his seed therein, but to cultivate it when it shall spring forth, and waiting patiently for the early and latter rains, to garner the fruits in the harvest time. He must have opportunity to lay his plans and carry them into execution. But owing to an unfortunate disposition to change, which, in these times exists among us, such opportunity is very seldom afforded the minister. In the garden of the Church the husbandman that plants seldom remains to reap. Nor is it now as in the Apostles' time, when one sowed and another reaped, for now there is scarcely any reaping done, scarcely any ripening of the fruits. The husbandmen succeed each other so rapidly, that in the hurry of their coming and going, each treads out the seed which the other planted, and the gospel vineyard remains for the most part sterile and unproductive.

The stability of character which distinguished a former generation has passed away, and we have many times feared is not to return to us any more. With the coming in of the present age those "good old days" were ended; those days which will be blessed in the memory of men forever, when the relation which united the Christian Pastor and his People, was a relation for life; when the attachments thus formed were to be enduring; when the love and the friendship thus growing up, was never to be violated by separation; when the Pastor could rejoice in each new tie that bound him to his people, knowing that that tie would be a lasting one and know no future severing. The days in which we live, in many things so much better than the past, are still in many other things changed for the worst. In most directions there has been a cheering progress; in some things, however, we have degenerated, and in nothing more than in that, which has brought change and instability into the ministerial relation. How hurtful to our prosperity and to spirituality in our churches, this restless, changing habit is, a little reflection must show. It has almost killed out from among us the spirit of devotion. It is a complete hindrance to any settled and permanent plans of labor. It has nearly destroyed the Pastoral Office; for in these times we have scarcely any Pastors. Preachers, we have a goodly number; but Pastors, who settle, live with, and continue among their people, instructing or feeding them with heavenly truth, as their office implies, we have but a very few.

To the evil which I am now deploring, you, my brethren, as a Christian Society, afford a striking and worthy

exception.* Between yourselves and pastor, during the years that are past, there has existed that sincere and abiding attachment to which I have alluded as so necessary to your mutual happiness and success. Nor has the dissolution of the connection which has so long subsisted between you, been occasioned by that spirit of unrest, that disposition to change, which we have been deprecating. A circumstance over which neither of you have had control, — the necessity for exemption from the labors and burdens of his office, which the health of your pastor demanded, — led to the change which has taken place. And the change has occurred with very few of the unpleasant circumstances that usually accompany such changes. The sundering of those holy ties which is occasioned by the separation of pastor and people, the sorrows that come thus, can hardly be said to have occurred in your case. The separation between you is by no means entire. No farewell words have had to be spoken. You continue together in the enjoyment of each others friendship and society. Though the official bond of your connection is dissolved, the spiritual and social tie, that for so long a period has united you, remains unbroken. He who has been to you so faithful a friend and devoted a Pastor, is not lost to you. He continues in your midst. That pure, unsullied example which, as a man and a Christian he has maintained among you during the years he has lived with you; that high example of Christian virtue and integrity, which has been of such immeasurable value to you and to your community, does not cease; it also is continued to you. And

* For a period of twenty-two years the Rev. M. B. Ballou, son of the late venerated Father Ballou, was minister of the Parish at Stoughton; and had his health permitted, without doubt would have continued their Pastor for life.

while thus, it can scarcely be said that you lose your former Pastor ; you have the benefit, if in it there is to be any benefit, of the labors of another. While you form a new relation you do not break the old ; you are to have the results and pleasures that flows from both.

And with reference to myself in my connection with you, permit me to say, that for the efficiency of my labors among you, I hope that that connection is to be a permanent one. One people I have loved fondly, devotedly, with all the strength and ardor of a first attachment. The circumstances that occasioned my separation from them were ordained by a power other than my own. The experience through which I have just passed, in speaking to them my farewell words, I never wish to pass again. The attachments which shall be formed among a new people, the love and friendship which shall grow up, I trust are to be perpetual. I hope, dear brethren, for the sake of our own happiness, and for the interests of our common work, that we shall be so mutually faithful to each other, that we shall long desire the continuance of the connection into which we have now entered. For only with this prospect in view, can I betake myself with a true, heartfelt devotion to the labors that are before me. Only thus, will it be possible for me to do that work which will devolve upon me as your Pastor to do.

(2) I would now mention another thing necessary to that prosperity which we desire and expect, which is, that you brethren, will lend me your co-operation. Without the sympathy and assistance of his people, the Pastor cannot accomplish much. The work is one in which they must act. It is to be done in and for them, and can be accomplished only through the exertions which they them-

selves are earnestly determined to put forth. Nothing is so unfortunate for a Society, as to place too much dependence on what a minister is going to do for them. This is sadly injurious to the growth of religion among any people, and is to be discouraged wherever it exists. Prosperity comes, if it come at all, through other means than the mere eloquence or tact of the preacher. I have ever been of the conviction that the religious character of a people, will do more to advance their prosperity than all other things combined. A sect can be powerful only through its virtue ; through the strength of the integrity, moral vigor, devotion and piety which dwells in the hearts of its members. The exhibition of the Christian virtues in the lives of a people will invest them with an unmeasured power. Well am I persuaded, that let a people arise, who are willing to consecrate themselves to the one lofty and sole purpose of living as Christians, who will be solicitous mainly to cultivate a sincere and ardent piety, and to practice the morality of the New Testament, let, I say, such a people arise and set themselves thus, to realize in their midst the benign principles of Jesus, and they will immediately attain to a power that is well nigh omnipotent—a power more efficient for good than all the eloquence of their preachers, and all other agencies employed for a generation.

My brethren, let this lofty aim be yours. Let this be the noble instrumentality by which you will seek the furtherance of your cause. In this manner will you render it most effectual assistance. And thus also will you render to your Pastor that aid which he will need from your hands. And here let me repeat, that he will need your help. And I know I shall be pardoned if I here

allude to the greatness of the labor pertaining to the office of the Christian Pastor. It is difficult for any but him who has the work to do, to realize the strength demanded for it. He, however, knows that the business of his office is no light affair. Its duties are many and require great dilligence. If his studies receive proper attention, and the other duties of his parish be faithfully discharged, he can be no idle man. He must work early and late, carrying in his breast cares and anxieties which, in other spheres of life are utterly unknown. It is a work that demands strength and fortitude. It is a work that needs help. And that help which I have asked of you, my friends, I know you will cheerfully grant. You have not called me to my place among you, to leave me to toil alone. You will sustain me in my efforts to serve you. You will uphold my hands and be co-workers with me.

And beside your active assistance, my brethren, I shall need your sympathy, I shall need your confidence. I shall want to feel that your hearts are with me. Be assured that in whatever I shall do, my aim will be your welfare, your best good. Whatever course I shall pursue, or whatever I shall propose among you, will be from the persuasion of the benefit it will be to the interests of religion, to the cause of truth and righteousness. I shall have no other object than the prosperity of that cause, and all my efforts will be directed to its promotion. And I desire of you, to be persuaded of this fact. And when at any time a course shall be proposed or a method adopted, the propriety of which may not be clear to you, and which may even be mistaken on my part—which is not at all improbable, for there are none of us too wise to err—

then, I hope you will be generous enough to believe that I have proposed and done as I have, from the conviction in my own heart of the correctness and usefulness of the course. Whatever I shall do among you, will be done because I believe it right. That I shall do, in all instances; that which will be approved by all, I ought not to expect. To do that which will please all, the Christian minister early learns to be an impossibility. In the first days of Christianity it was discovered by one of the most faithful of preachers, that “in many things we offend all.” Education has created such a dissimilarity in the opinions of men, that what seems correct to one, seems injudicious to another, what one deems right, another deems wrong, what one believes advisable, another as firmly believes unadvisable, so that he who would attempt to satisfy all minds, will find before him a most difficult task. As reasonable men, I know you, my brethren, do not require this of your Pastor. You will not expect to have him always fulfil all your ideas, and all your wishes. So far as in him lies, so far as duty and conscience will permit him to go, this will be his aim; and with this you will be satisfied.

It is, however, oftentimes the case with Societies that different members, with their different ideas of what a minister should be and do, set up their various standards and require him to conform to them. One would have him pursue this course, and another that; one would have his preaching of this character, and another would insist that it should be of a different style; one would have him take part in this thing, and another would have him let it alone, and each is determined to have his own ideas answered, if not, he is dissatisfied. But, I will not wrong

you, my friends, by supposing that any such state of things exists among you. I know right well that you have no disposition to place your minister in any such unpleasant position. A nobler feeling exists in your midst. It seems to me that you could have little esteem for one, who would sink the high duties of his office to the ignoble work of the mere entertainment and pleasure of men. I am not going here to be at any trouble to declare my independence. That noble generosity of spirit which I have witnessed among you, assures me that you desire nothing else. You do not wish a slave to stand in your pulpit, to utter just such words as are put into his mouth, and to take just such steps in his movements among you as may be pointed out to him. Rather, it seems to me you desire one, and will esteem him most, who will act freely, following the promptings and dictates of his own high sense of duty. My office imposes upon me the sacred duty of promoting the cause of virtue and religion. Your spiritual growth is to be the object for which I am to strive; and devoting myself to this single purpose, striving only for those things that shall be to your best welfare, those things which shall promote virtue and piety among you, and bring peace and happiness into your homes, thus making it my aim to labor for all that will conduce to your truest interests, I hope to commend myself, in some measure at least, to your regard and affection. Morning and night while I live among you, I shall pray the Divine Father for guidance and assistance in my labors. And, my brethren, let me ask of you the aid of your prayers. Remember me in your addresses to the throne of grace. When in your family circles, or in your closets you petition for Divine assistance, remember your Church and your pastor. All true help is from above.

God only can direct our ways aright. We can find the unerring paths of rectitude, only when guided by the Divine Spirit. Let it be our habit then, to pray mutual blessings upon one another. In all our labors, let us ask for that wisdom which is from on high.

And it seems appropriate here that I should remind you, my brethren, that the work we have to accomplish is a great one. Its magnitude, all the art of human language must fail to declare. We have a work to do for ourselves, and for the community in which we live. Each of us, personally, has to strive for the perfection of the principles of the Gospel in his own heart, and also, he is to strive for the promulgation of that Gospel in the world around him. May it be our aim, brethren, may it be our high and generous endeavor to realize among us the true pattern of a Christian Society. Individually, let us consecrate ourselves to God, to virtue, to holiness, to the Christian life. And together, let us strive to build ourselves up into the true ideal of the Christian Church.

This pulpit, while I occupy it, will be sacred to the realization of this lofty purpose among you. It will be sacred to the work of the Gospel, the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ—the Gospel of reconciliation. It will be consecrated to truth, and to the promotion of every virtue. It will be sacred to the interests of humanity, to whatever is calculated to exalt and improve mankind, to whatever in any manner has a bearing upon the religious welfare of men.

There are topics, I am aware, that are inappropriate to this place. Those I trust will be judiciously excluded. It is easy to discover what does belong here. Understand-

ing that the design of the pulpit is man's redemption from sin, that it is the agency appointed of Heaven by which the human race is to be rescued from vice and from every wrong, we see at once that whatever has relation to that work has a rightful claim to advocacy here, while, whatever does not pertain to that work must find place for itself elsewhere.

In relation to those sects which do not agree with us in our understanding of the doctrines of the Gospel, it will be, as in my past course it has ever been, my aim to cultivate peaceful relations. The narrowness and the bigotry of a former age are rapidly passing away. There is gradually growing up among the Christian sects a new, and I believe Divine spirit of charity—a spirit of Christian liberality, of brotherly kindness and good will. Everywhere, among Christians of all creeds and forms of faith, there is growing up this disposition to bear with one another in their differences of belief, generously resolving that while they continue to be of various minds as to doctrine, they will yet share that more important union enjoined by their common Master, even “the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace.”

It has always seemed to me an ungracious business to build up the walls of sectarian partition. I have always considered it more conformable with Christian practice, to seek for unity and good will among the different portions of the Church; and in the spirit of this sentiment I have always advocated an enlarged and generous regard for Christians of all sects; for though we have different names, and our creeds are shaped in different forms, though some of us are called Methodists, and some Presbyterians, some Unitarians, some Baptists, and some Universalists, still,

we are all the professed disciples of one Master, we have all the same work of good to do, and are travelling to one and the same final Home in the Everlasting Mansions.

In advocating this peaceful relation towards those of other faiths, I shall seek to do it in conformity with an unswerving devotion to and advocacy of the principles and doctrines of our own faith. Every sect should preach its own doctrines. Men have no higher duty than to utter their convictions of truth. We should preach our doctrines. Indeed, no sect is so obligated as are we to publish the truths and principles of our faith. Those truths and principles are the world's great need ; and a binding duty rests upon us faithfully and constantly to declare them.

I have now said about all that it is necessary for me to say at this time. It has been the chief aim of my discourse to point out the Nature of the connection into which as Pastor and people we are now entering, and to state the Means necessary to its prosperity. And now, with this understanding of our mutual duties, I trust we shall not fail to labor together in love, in the utmost harmony, and to the best advancement of the cause we cherish.

When Paul wrote the first Corinthian letter he declared, that when he came to the Church to whom it was addressed, he determined to know nothing among them, save Jesus Christ and him crucified. By this he meant that all his work with them was to promote the principles and spirit of Jesus Christ among them ; that all he would do, attend to, or know among them was the cultivation of the virtues of Jesus' religion. Brethren, even this same lofty aim I desire to make my own in my connection with you. It is my desire, in all that I shall do, attend to, or know among you, to labor only for the promotion of the Divine

principles and beautiful spirit of Jesus in your midst. It is my earnest wish to devote myself to you, to give my heart and all my powers to the diffusion of the virtues and joys of religion in your households, among yourselves and children. You will become very dear to me. And I desire to live among you, not in the coldness of a mere business relation, as being engaged to do so much work for so much pay ; but I desire to be as one of your own number, and that you will be to me as members of my own family, whose welfare I shall watch and seek for, even as a father would watch over and seek for the welfare of his children. And now, to Him that hath power to stablish you according to the Gospel, to God the only wise, be glory, through Jesus Christ, forever.
AMEN.



